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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Production and Marketing Administration
Food Distribution Programs Branch

MONTHLY FOOD SUPPLY REPORT -- FEBRUARY 1946

The food supply situation in early February, as revealed by the monthly survey of the adequacy of food supplies, was essentially the same as a month before except for a few products. The most significant changes from a month ago were a falling-off of supplies, in relation to civilian demand, for evaporated milk, margarine, rice, hamburger, veal, and lamb, and an increase in supplies of eggs. Eggs had become markedly in surplus. Butter remains scarce in all areas. Large demand kept supplies of many foods in the generally scarce category, but other important foods continued to be available. Butter, bacon, shortening, canned salmon and tuna, and soap remain generally scarce in all regions.

The 209 reports as summarized in this analysis are based on information gathered by field representatives during the first week of February at meetings of food advisory committees and by direct contacts with the food trade. The reports were distributed among the five regions as follows: Northeast 28, Midwest 60, South 47, Southwest 40, and West 34.

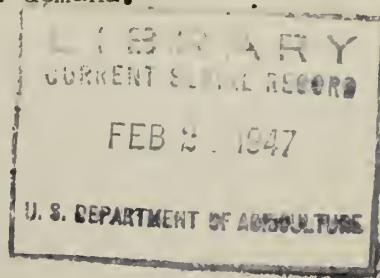
The analysis, as in the past, is divided into three parts. Part I gives a narrative summary of the month's developments. Part II gives percentage figures for each region, dividing commodities into three groups: generally scarce, generally adequate, and unbalanced. It must be remembered that these percentages are based on the number of areas reporting the situation rather than on quantitative measures. Furthermore, each area report is given equal weight in computing the regional and U. S. totals. Thus, shortage situations or differences among regions may be exaggerated. Part III shows the food situation in 30 selected localities.

The three categories of adequacy of supplies used in this survey are defined as follows:

Scarce: Supply is less than three-quarters of current demand.

Adequate: Supply more than three-quarters of current demand but not sufficiently in excess of such demand to cause excessive inventories.

Surplus: Able to obtain supplies in quantities greater than demand. Inventories heavy and rapidly becoming excessive in view of current level of demand.



PART I - ADEQUACY OF FOOD SUPPLIES

Fruits and Vegetables

Canned fruits: Aside from another slight decrease in the small number of areas with adequate supplies of fruit cocktail, no change was reported during January in the ability of the food trade to meet demands for the four major canned fruits. Of these four items, peaches continued to be most readily available in early February, being in adequate supply in over one-third of the nation's areas, while supplies of pineapple and pears were generally inadequate in almost all areas.

Canned juices: All citrus juices were generally plentiful in early February, and there was a continued decrease in the number of shortage areas and an increase in that of surplus areas. The latter accounted for 8 percent of the total areas reporting on grapefruit juice, 5 percent for orange juice, and 3 percent for blended juices. Pineapple juice for the first time was reported in short supply in every area in the country. Distribution of tomato juice was fairly even and the demand for this commodity was being met in nearly all areas.

Canned vegetables: Snap beans, corn, and peas continued in adequate supply in most areas. Peas, however, were slightly more difficult to obtain than in early January, and no surpluses were reported anywhere. Comments received from the field indicate top grades are particularly scarce. Stocks of tomatoes remained inadequate to meet demand, and the scarcity appeared to be increasing in the Northeast and Midwest regions as the pack year draws closer to an end.

Frozen foods: All frozen fruits were in short supply in early February. Supplies of apricots and peaches showed a slight improvement from the previous month, but those of strawberries showed no improvement. Frozen vegetables, such as snap beans, cut corn, peas, and spinach, were fairly adequate, with each of these except peas registering an improvement since early January. Lima beans continued in overall short supply, being slightly more scarce than in January.

Dried foods: Prunes maintained the supply level achieved in January and were adequate in two-thirds of the nation's areas. Raisins were less difficult to obtain than at any time in the past 6 months. Supplies of dry beans fell off in relation to demand and were particularly short in the Northeast region.

Fresh foods: Oranges continued seasonally adequate and good distribution was being maintained at present prices. Irish potatoes were reported in surplus in 9 percent of the areas and adequate in the remainder. A significant increase in surplus areas in the South since early January was balanced by a decrease in the West. In the case of cabbage, there were more surplus areas in the Northeast than a month before, but elsewhere supplies were adequate.

Meats, Dairy Products, Fats, Sugar, and Other Items

Meats: Consumer demand for most meats was more difficult to meet in early February than had been the case a month earlier. For no type of fresh meat was demand being satisfied in much over two-fifths of the reporting areas. During the past month lamb, veal, and beef hamburger registered the greatest decline in areas with adequate supplies, with a shift of 16 to 19 percent to the "scarce" category taking place in the case of these items. Despite large production of pork, the recent increase in areas with adequate supplies of loin chops and roasts was checked during January. However, there was a very slight improvement in the supply of ham and shoulder, both fresh and cured. Salted fat cuts were unchanged, remaining in short supply in over one-half of all areas, but at the same time 6 out of 206 areas reporting this month on this item considered supplies in excess of demand. Only 9 percent of all areas reported bacon in adequate supply, but this is the highest proportion reported in a number of months. Surplus reports on cold cuts such as bologna and salami were less frequent than in early January, but this item continued generally adequate. A slight improvement was apparent in the case of canned meats which have been in short supply for a long period.

Fish: Hardly any change was registered in the availability of fresh and frozen fish. Two-thirds of the areas reported supplies were sufficient to fill demands. Canned fish continued in very tight supply, with tuna and sardines even more scarce than in early January.

Dairy products: The current butter shortage, caused by seasonally low production and diversion of butterfat to other dairy products, was reflected in a further falling-off in the number of areas with adequate supplies. Outside of the Midwest, almost no areas could meet consumer demand, and in that heavy-producing region only one-third of the areas reported doing so. Cheeses were slightly more scarce in all parts of the country. A marked drop in evaporated milk supplies was registered in all regions except the Midwest; nationally 58 percent of areas reported "adequate" supplies in early February as against 83 percent a month before.

Fats and oils: The increase in unsatisfied demand for butter caused a heavy demand for margarine, so that the proportion of areas with adequate supplies of margarine dropped from 62 to 39 percent during January. Lard supplies were slightly larger in relation to demand than in any recent month but were still in overall short supply. Stocks of shortening and salad oils were reported as scarce in practically all areas in the country. Soaps other than toilet continued in very tight supply and were even slightly scarcer in most sections than in early January.

Sugar: No significant change occurred in the adequacy of the supply of sugar, except that in the South the proportion of adequately-stocked areas increased from 71 to 85 percent of those reporting. The Northeast continued to feel the pinch of short supplies and less than a third of the areas in this region were meeting rationed demand.

Other items: The proportion of areas reporting a scarcity of eggs declined from 29 percent in January to 2 percent in February while the proportion reporting a surplus increased from 4 to 24 percent. The current surplus was most marked in the Northeast and South. Chicken was in surplus in 11 percent

of the areas as against 7 percent in January, with the Northeast and South again leading in the proportion of such reports.

Rice supplies had dropped back to the November level after an improvement in December, and as of early February were insufficient to meet demand in three-fifths of all areas.

PART II - NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SITUATION BY COMMODITIES

FOODS THAT ARE GENERALLY SCARCE (A) -- reported scarce by at least one-third of the areas in all five regions. National figures are based on the actual number of areas reporting, and are not averages of the regional percentages.

	Percent Reporting Scarce Supplies					
	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>N.E.</u>	<u>M.W.</u>	<u>S.</u>	<u>S.W.</u>	<u>W.</u>
<u>Fruits and vegetables</u>						
Canned fruit cocktail	88	93	92	96	72	82
Canned peaches	64	96	55	72	65	41
Canned pears	95	100	100	98	95	76
Canned pineapple	99	100	100	100	98	100
Canned pineapple juice	100	100	100	100	100	100
Canned tomatoes	71	96	65	66	68	74
Frozen apricots	63	75	67	61	52	61
Frozen peaches	58	71	60	52	63	47
Frozen strawberries	95	100	95	89	95	100
Frozen beans, lima	69	64	72	70	65	68
Raisins	52	68	35	49	58	68
Dry beans	76	96	68	81	70	74
<u>Meats, dairy products, and fats</u>						
Veal: steaks, chops, and roasts	68	86	70	87	35	62
Pork: loin, chops, and roasts	58	79	61	62	42	47
ham and shoulder, fresh	66	75	63	62	63	65
ham and shoulder, cured	86	89	82	81	85	97
salted fat cuts	55	54	61	36	55	73
bacon	91	86	91	89	90	100
Canned salmon	96	100	98	98	100	82
Canned tuna	94	100	92	91	97	91
Canned sardines	92	89	95	91	87	94
Butter	90	100	68	100	95	100
Cheese (all types)	84	93	86	79	78	88
Margarine	61	89	40	49	55	97
Lard	66	46	60	60	85	79
Shortening	98	100	97	94	100	100
Salad oils	96	100	93	92	100	97
Soap: bar laundry	99	100	100	100	98	100
flakes and granules	98	96	97	100	100	97
washing powder	93	96	92	96	90	91
<u>Miscellaneous</u>						
Rice	59	75	50	57	57	56

FOODS THAT ARE GENERALLY ADEQUATE (B) -- reported in adequate or surplus supply by more than two-thirds of the areas in all five regions. Percentages starred include 10 percent or more "surplus" reports. National figures are based on the actual number of areas reporting, and are not averages of the regional percentages.

	Percent Reporting Adequate or Surplus Supplies					
	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>N.E.</u>	<u>M.W.</u>	<u>S.</u>	<u>S.W.</u>	<u>W.</u>
<u>Fruits and vegetables</u>						
Grapefruit juice	99	100	97	100	100*	97
Orange juice	98	100	98	96	100*	97
Orange-grapefruit juice	97	100	97	94	100*	97
Canned beans, green and wax	93	89	100	100	95	71
Canned corn	87	86	98	81	80	85
Canned peas	93	82	98	92	90	97
Tomato juice	94	89	97	94	92	94
Frozen beans, snap	77	75	79	74	81	71
Frozen spinach	86	93	85	81	87	84
Oranges, fresh	99	96	100	100	100	100
Potatoes, Irish	100	100*	100*	100*	100	100
Cabbage	100	100*	100	100	100	100
<u>Meats</u>						
Cold cuts, bologna, etc.	91	89	96	89	95*	82
Chicken	96*	100*	98	91*	100	91*
<u>Miscellaneous</u>						
Eggs, shell	98*	100*	100*	94*	100*	94*

FOODS THAT ARE UNBALANCED (U) -- reported adequate or surplus in more than two-thirds of the areas in one to four regions, scarce in other regions. National figures are based on the actual number of areas reporting, and are not averages of the regional percentages.

	Percent Reporting Adequate or Surplus Supplies					
	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>N.E.</u>	<u>M.W.</u>	<u>S.</u>	<u>S.W.</u>	<u>W.</u>
<u>Fruits and vegetables</u>						
Frozen corn, cut	68	61	84	49	65	71
Frozen peas	67	46	69	60	73	84
Dried prunes	68	39	70	70	88	62
<u>Meat and dairy products</u>						
Beef: steak	43	21	37	23	62	74
roast	45	21	37	23	68	79
hamburger	49	36	39	26	72	82
Lamb: steaks, chops, & roast	42	21	42	19	75	53
Canned meats	51	57	71	32	50	38
Fish, fresh & frozen	68	57	91	67	49	61
Evaporated milk	58	57	90	34	38	59
<u>Miscellaneous</u>						
Sugar	80	29	90	85	85	91

PART III - LOCAL SITUATIONS

(Supplies are indicated as follows: A - Source; B - Adequate; C - Surplus; N - No Answer. Letters in parentheses after commodities refer to groups shown in Part II: (A) - Generally Scarce; (B) - Generally Adequate; (U) - Unbalanced.)

Product	'Balti'- 'ton, 'Md.	'Hart- 'falo, 'Mass.	'Buf- 'ford, 'N.Y.	'New 'Orl. 'Me.	'Chi- 'phia, 'Ill.	'Port- 'land, 'Ohio	'Cleve- 'rland, 'Ill.	'Del- 'St. 'Me.	'Mil- 'waukee, 'Wis.	'Wau- 'trot- 'keet, 'Ohio	'St. 'Louis, 'Mo.	'Ton- 'les- 'ton, 'S.C.
Beef: steak (U)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
roast (U)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
hamburger (U)	B	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	A
Veal: steaks, chops & roasts (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
Lamb: steaks, chops & roasts (U)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
Pork: loin, chops & roasts (A)	B	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
ham & shoulder, fresh (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
ham & shoulder, cured (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
salted fat cuts (A)	C	A	C	A	A	A	A	B	B	A	A	A
bacon (A)	A	B	C	B	B	A	A	B	B	A	A	A
Cold cuts, bologna (B)	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	A	A
Canned meats (U)	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	A	A
Fish, fresh & frozen (U)	B	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	A	A	A
Canned: salmon (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
tuna (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
sardines (A)	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	A	A
Butter (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Cheese (all types) (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Evaporated milk (U)	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	A	A
Margarine (A)	A	B	B	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
Lard (A)	A	B	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
Shortening (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
Salad oils (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
Bar laundry soaps (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Flakes & granules (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Washing powder (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Sugar (U)	A	B	B	A	A	A	A	A	B	C	B	B
Eggs, shell (B)	A	B	B	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B
Chicken (B)	A	B	B	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B
Rice (A)	A	B	B	A	A	A	A	A	B	C	B	B

Product	'Jack-' 'son-' 'Louis-Mem- 'ville'ville'phis,' 'Fla. 'Ky.	'Nor-' 'Folk,' 'B.	'Hous-' 'Ver,' 'ton,' 'Tenn.' 'Ala.' 'Va.	'Den-' 'Folks,' 'B.' 'B.' 'A.'	'Fran-' 'City,' 'land,' 'Texas'Colo.' 'Cal.' 'Ariz.' 'Ore.' 'Utah'La.' 'Nash.	'Salt 'San 'Lōs-' 'New '	'
Fruit cocktail (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Peaches (A)	A	A	A	B	A	A	A
Pears (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	B
Pineapple (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Grapefruit juice (B)	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Orange juice (B)	B	B	B	B	B	B	C
Orange-grapefruit juice (B)	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Pineapple juice (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Beans green & wax (B)	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Corn (B)	B	B	A	B	B	B	B
Peas (B)	A	B	B	A	A	B	B
Tomatoes (A)	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Tomato juice (B)	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Co.							
Frozen apricots (A)	A	B	A	B	C	B	B
Peaches (A)	A	A	A	A	B	B	B
strawberries (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
beans, lime (A)	A	A	B	B	A	A	A
beans snap (B)	A	A	B	B	B	B	A
corn, cut (U)	A	A	B	A	B	B	B
peas (U)	B	B	B	A	B	B	B
spinach (B)	B	A	A	B	B	B	B
Dried prunes (U)	B.	B.	B.	B.	B.	B.	B.
Paisins (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Dry beans (A)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Oranges (B)	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Potatoes, Trish (B)	B	B	B	C	B	B	B
Cabbage (B)	B	B	B	B	B	B	B

